Allocation of funds to research organisations

2621. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is downgrading State support to science and technology in the name of self-reliance;

(b) ifso, whether the decrease in the funds allocated for public sector research organisations and key research programmes during the United Progressive Alliance regime does not amount to down-grading State support to science and technology; and

(c) the steps Government is contemplating to encourage research and related programmes that were neglected in the past?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Government has enhanced support for science and technology from year to year. The allocation of funds for Central Scienctific Departments during the year 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09 was Rs. 6553.74 crores, Rs. 7524 crores, Rs. 8596 crores and Rs. 9206 crores respectively.

(c) The Government have taken various measures to encourage research in the country. These measures include higher allocation for scientific research for setting up of new institutions for science education and research, creation of centres of excellence and facilities in emerging and frontline areas in academic and national institutes, induction of new attractive fellowships, strengthening infrastructure for R&D in universities, encouraging public private R&D partnerships, national awards for outstanding R&D etc.

Project on bacterial isolates

2622. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is taking up a project in which the industry and academic will work together to screen a large number of bacterial isolates;

(b) if so, whether the project will help in fighting lethal diseases like cancer, diabetes and other diseases;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) what is the total outlay of the project and how much is contributed by Government and private bodies; and

(e) if so, by when the project is expected to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government has recently sanctioned a project in which industry and nine academic institutes are working together to screen a large number of bacterial isolates from different parts of the country.

(b) and (c) The project aims at screening for drugs for anti-cancer, anti-diabetes, anti-inflammation and anti-infective.

(d) The total outlay of the project is Rs. 2485.52 lakhs with DBT's contribution Rs. 1798.08 lakhs and Industry's contribution Rs, 687.44 lakhs.

(e) The project is expected to be completed in 2010.

Slow research work for invention of new medicines

t2623. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the research work for invention of new medicines is not advancing at the required pace in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the amount allocated by Government for undertaking research-work for invention of new medicines during the last three years; and

(d) the amount utilized for this purpose during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) The Government has launched a programme specially for Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Research in DST for developing new molecules/drugs in all systems of medicines. In addition drug research is being undertaken both by public and private R&D institutions for developing medicines.

(c) and (d) The amount allocated for Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Research Programme in DST for the year 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08 is Rs. 115.00 crores, Rs. 60.00 crores, Rs. 118.00 crores respectively The utilization of funds is Rs. 115.50 crores, Rs. 60.00 crores and Rs. 118.00 crores for the respective years.

High Cost of advanced technology

2624. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether in India cost of advanced technology has become prohibitive;

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to bring down these costs and to set up a forward looking agenda; and

(c) whether Government has made any efforts to find out the reasons for such increase in the costs?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) No, Sir, Advanced technologies are not available off the shelf. They used to be developed by launching missions and funding projects within India. Successful outcomes reduce the cost of such technologies. However, in the case of certain technologies which are denied to Indian companies or entities on account of sanctions, such acquisitions are not possible.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

t Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.